

PR of Tajikistan to the UN Learns About UIMF Contribution to Mountain Targets



(L to R): Hagen Isaacson and Ambassador Mahmamin Mahmadaminov

On October 5th, 2018, the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU) (www.utahimf.org) in coordination with the UVU Office for Global Engagement had the privilege of hosting His Excellency Mr. Mahmamin Mahmadaminov, the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations (UN). As a new member of UIMF, I had an opportunity for the first time to co-host an Ambassador and showcase to the VIP guest the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets that UIMF advocates for on the global scale. Along with this, UIMF members also informed the VIP-guest about recent recognitions and achievements that it has received by both the UN and the United States Congress.

Before Ambassador Mahmaminov gave his presentation on Tajikistan, UIMF members had the time for a special meeting to inform the top envoy from Tajikistan to the UN about UIMF and the SDG targets it has focused on since 2011 when the coalition of clubs was established. During this meeting, I presented Ambassador Mahmaminov with a folder containing documents that highlighted recent recognitions of UIMF contributions to the promotion of the mountain targets from the UN and by US Congressman John Curtis. I also spoke about UIMF's focus on

three mountain targets underneath the SDGs. These three targets are 6.6, 15.1, and 15.4. I specifically highlighted target 6.6, which is underneath SDG #6 that focuses on clean water and sanitation. This target related to Tajikistan as the country has done great work within its country with sustainable water and promoting it globally, and from the UN podium in particular.

This experience was an excellent learning opportunity for me as a new member of UIMF because it allowed me to gain a better understanding of what SDGs UIMF has advocated for previously at the UN and that we are pushing for today. This was a sound example of engaged student learning that both UVU and UIMF provides for students. Through hosting Ambassador Mahmaminov, I gained professional skills by getting real experience of working with and presenting to a foreign dignitary. I learned about how to compose myself in a professional way and made connections that will be very beneficial later on in my educational and professional career.

After UIMF presented, Ambassador Mahmaminov gave a lecture on Tajikistan and some of the initiatives that he has focused on for SDGs implementations at the UN. He talked a lot about how Utah reminded him of Tajikistan. The two regions are very similar in geography and that is why UIMF focused a large part of the discussion on the Utah model of sustainable mountain development, which is one of the best in the world, with Ambassador Mahmaminov and how certain experiences in Utah could be replicated in his own country and vice versa. A lot of Ambassador Mahmaminov's presentation revolved around water sustainability, construction and use of hydroelectric dams. Tajikistan's promotion of SDG #6 on water sustainability is a big reason why I highlighted an opportunity for UIMF to work with the Permanent Mission of Tajikistan to implement jointly both SDG #6 and mountain target 6.6 during our presentation.

The opportunity of hosting Ambassador Mahmaminov at UVU provided me with more knowledge about SDG goals and mountain targets that UIMF focuses on through the student engaged learning model. It also happened thanks to continued support to UIMF from the UVU office of Global Engagement, which included in the agenda of the dignitary not only a special meeting for UIMF members, but also included many UIMF members in a lunch with Ambassador Mahmaminov.

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